

the story of CALIFORNIA'S trees

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published

Edward Weston
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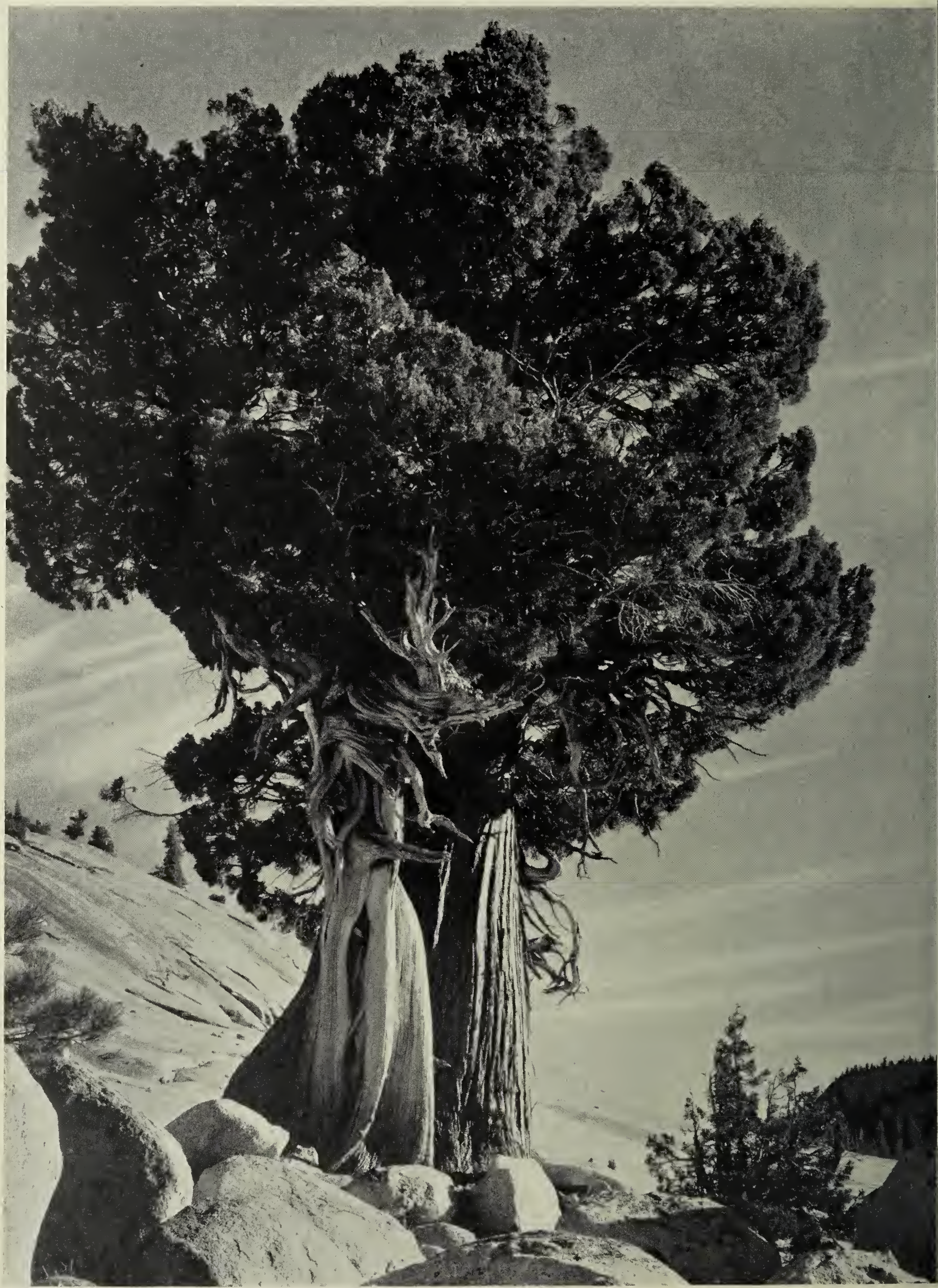
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WESTERN JUNIPER

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Edward Weston*

The Story of California's Trees

IN HISTORY, RELIGION, LEGEND
AND MYTH

by
Henry Harcourt Waters

PRIVATELY PRINTED

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California

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THE STORY OF CALIFORNIA'S TREES

BY HENRY HARCOURT WATERS

*"Wise with the lore of centuries,
What tales, if there be 'tongues in trees,'
Those giant oaks could tell,
Of beings born and buried here;
Tales of the peasant and the peer,
Tales of the bridal and the bier,
The welcome and farewell,
Since on their boughs the startled bird
First, in her twilight slumbers, heard
The Norman's curfew bell."*

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK

HERE is a history of California's trees, written by a scholar for the tree-loving layman.

There is no work like it—for no other such work exists; oddly enough, its theme has heretofore moulded away "among the subjects overlooked in horticultural and historical literature."

Paradoxically, this book brings to the reader an intensely gripping story of old, old living things—pines, palms, oaks, cypresses, and the whole extraordinary number of trees rooted in California soil—as something new under the sun.

It is richly stocked with tales of individual trees which are notable either for singular characteristics of their own, or because they have been in the past co-actors with human beings in dramatic and significant events.

* *

"It took me many years to learn that each tree is an individual and has its own characteristics and 'personality.' Mr. Waters helps us really to appreciate these great plants which add so much to the beauty of our surroundings and to the grace of living."

RAY LYMAN WILBUR
President, Stanford University

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Such are the Vizcaino Oak in Old Monterey, whose history begins in 1602; the Sailor's Sycamore in Santa Barbara; 'Old Quercus' in Oakland; sinister

Jackson Hang-tree; the Death House Araucarias of San Quentin and the Macpalxochiquahuitl, or "Tree of the Little Hands," seemingly lifted in

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"I am very happy to endorse 'The Story of California's Trees.' Such a volume is greatly needed."

ETHEL L. GUIBERSON
President, California Garden Clubs, Inc.

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supplication for those who are about to die, and a host of other leafy celebrities whose tales are told within this entertaining book.

Literally blessed old Junipero Serra Palm of San Diego, a tree "every bit as distinguished among its species as was the good Father, for whom it was named, among men," is treated here perhaps more fully than ever before. Its venerable name reawakens the pageantry of high-hearted Spanish expeditions, of scurvy-ridden sailors dying by scores, of Don Gaspar

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"... 'The Story of California's Trees' is an excellent piece of work and one that will be of great interest to all lovers of Nature and particularly to our own state... I am looking forward with great anticipation to the publication of the volume."

EDGAR F. MAGNIN
Rabbi, Wilshire Boulevard Temple

* *

de Portola and Fray Junipero Serra hurrying to the suffering survivors—echo and color of a rich-tapestried past. But this is not all. To the stirring story of this "finest specimen of date palm growing in America," the author relates the ancient, biblical and Mohammedan tales of the palm itself, beginning seven thousand years before Christ. The history of this "prince among trees, whose praises have been sung by Hebrew, Indian, Persian and Arabian poets through the ages, is as old as history itself."

* *

"The plan and treatment of your book are outstanding."

NEWTON B. DRURY
Secretary, Save-the-Redwoods League

* *

It is the unique purpose of this volume thus to weld the stories of noted individual trees to the ancient history of the great 'tribes' to which they severally belong. For genus and species, too, have always played a major role in the history of mankind, and it has been near to the author's heart to show the age-long association between earth's silva and the sons of earth.

Religion, symbolism, myth and legend of Babylon, Carthage, Phœnicia, Persia, Greece, Rome and other ancients, and recorded history as

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"It gives me pleasure to endorse the highly valuable work you have done in tracing the history of outstanding trees. I feel sure you have made a permanent and valuable contribution to the arboreal lore of California."

WINIFRED DAVIDSON
Historian, San Diego Historical Society

LIVE OAKS

Courtesy of
Edward Weston



the story of CALIFORNIA'S trees

the period of hair, fur and feathers. With the exception of the cycads and the ginkgo (the latter the sole remaining representative, not only of its genus, but also of its entire family and order as well), the conifers are the oldest. And among this great family of plants the sequoia is patriarch of them all. Furthermore, few other genera of trees ever boasted such an unprecedented range, for everything indicates that the sequoia forests of Miocene times were the most imposing the world has ever known. ¶ The genealogy of the sequoia goes back almost to the dawn of the tiny original progenitors of the warm-blooded animals. The records of its lineage are locked up in the rocks and clays of the world in the form of bits of branches, cones and pieces of wood which floated down to the ancient seas and were entombed in the sand and mud to become preserved as fossils for the enlightenment of later ages. The sedimentary rocks teach us that death has played sad havoc in the sequoia's noble line and almost entirely swept away its principality. Everywhere on the broad areas of the Northern Hemisphere it is seen to have been replaced by

and sank into a fathomless sea, before the floor of a huge mediterranean sea extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the Hudson Bay had risen up to make the Mississippi Valley, before the great land bridges connecting our continent with Europe and Asia went down to oblivion, before the world's great mountain systems—the Himalayas, the Alps, the Andes and the Rockies had raised their heads, the sequoia reigned supreme. ¶ We cannot but wonder at the persistence of this tree for eon after eon, while all about was dissolution and evolution; yet, the vicissitudes of time have not succeeded in wholly obliterating these ancient records preserved in the great book of history whose torn pages are the solid rock. Coeval with gigantic sea-lizards, enormous

well, attest this beneficent relationship . . . The story of mankind without trees is indeed unthinkable . . . Primitive man envisioned and worshiped

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"It appears to me you have covered the subject very thoroughly and that the volume will be heartily welcomed by all Nature lovers."

JOHN McLAREN
Superintendent, Golden Gate Park
San Francisco

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a vast cosmogonic World Tree that overshadowed the universe; and Protestant, Catholic and Jew of today still revere trees or their products in the most sacred of their assemblages.

THIS VOLUME WILL APPEAL TO TREE-LOVERS WHEREVER THEY ARE FOUND, for in this state grow arboreal representatives of almost every altitude and climate in the world.

This is no treatise of a professional writer who has hit upon a good subject. The author brings to his self-appointed task the wide and profound knowledge minted from years of research, and his invaluable practical experience as a forester and landscape architect. The task itself was

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"You have certainly brought together a wealth of information."

PAUL POPENOE
Secretary, The Human Betterment Foundation
Pasadena

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prodigious, necessitating the borrowing of books from the world's leading libraries, involving endless translations. No source of information was overlooked.

The other factor is not of the intellect. It is the author's genuine love for trees and—if the expression may be used—his insight into their lives. Knowledge of trees and understanding of them, amounting at times to an almost naive fervor, seemingly kindled a fire which had to flare forth into

* *

"Such a book has a distinguished place in literature. The history of our trees in California is so intimately connected with the work of the early Padres that I feel sure your book will be well received by anyone interested in the romantic story of the Golden State."

JOHN J. CANTWELL
Archbishop of the Catholic Diocese of
Los Angeles and San Diego

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such a book. It is such situations that result in outstanding literary works; beyond question it has proven so in this case. And when produced solely in a privately printed and registered edition, it will be treasured by men and women of fine feeling as something beautiful and rare, and therefore precious.

Marvel after marvel is spread out upon these pages, too many to enumerate. There is the weird Joshua tree whose relationship with a small

night-flying moth is exceeded in wonder by no phenomenon in the biological world, a correspondence so delicately balanced that if it were totally

* *

"Five years of intensive study and research have been expended on this book to make it an outstanding compilation of fact and fiction. It presents interesting information about California trees, both endemic and introduced, that has never before been available and which should be a joy and satisfaction to all tree and garden lovers."

RALPH D. CORNELL
*President, Southern California Chapter,
American Society of Landscape Architects*

* *

interrupted for a single generation, both tree and moth would join the ever-increasing army of extinct organisms. There is the Trask Mahogany, earth's rarest tree, barely sustaining itself on one side of a single, rocky canyon in all the world. And the bizarre Ginkgo, "literally a living fossil . . . as out of place in the vegetable world of today as the dinosaur would be in the animal world."

Endless curious and interesting items season the more sedate information in these valuable chapters; California's topography has been amazingly altered by the introduction of the towering Eucalyptus . . . A rider on the

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"The work seems to me to be an admirable and needed enterprise. I shall certainly look forward to possessing a copy when it is published."

*STEWART EDWARD WHITE

* *

fleetest horse could not encircle *Tooba*, the mythological tree of the Mohammedans, in a hundred years . . . King Hiram of Tyre employed eighty thousand skilled hewers for many years in the forests of Lebanon to supply the cedar wood necessary for the vast architectural achievements of Solomon . . . Man's first craving for alcohol had its inception, not from the juice of the grape, but from the sap of the palm—the "Drink of Life" of

* *

"I have read the whole manuscript, 'The Story of California's Trees,' carefully . . . and I have found it to be of great interest. It has impressed me as a very valuable contribution not to the botanist alone but to historians and other students of humanity as well. I hope this book will be published soon and find its way to a wide public, receiving its approval as it has of mine."

A. M. TONNIS
*Principal of Sinai Religious Schools and former Professor of
Hebrew and History of the Jewish people
at the University of Southern California*

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old Babylonia . . . The Pepper tree was revered by the Incas and as early as 1540 was introduced into Mexico from Peru . . . Of cypress wood were

* Stewart Edward White has honored the book with a Foreword.

formed Cupid's darts and Jove's sceptre, as was the club of Hercules and the mallet of Thor . . . The great cypress doors of ancient St. Peter's at Rome, when removed by Eugenius IV, were about eleven hundred years

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"A valuable contribution to the library of tree lore. Written in easy non-technical form, it makes interesting reading for the layman and brings to us vividly the need for a great arboretum in California wherein all these glorious trees could be observed, studied and admired by all the world."

EDWARD H. SCANLON

*Executive Secretary for the Western Shade Tree Conference
and Editor of "Western Trees, Parks & Forests"*

* *

old and in perfect condition . . . The bride's wreath of orange blossoms originated with the Saracens in mediæval times and was regarded as an emblem of fecundity because the orange is one of those unusual trees bearing fruit, flowers and foliage at the same time.

Here, then is a unique contribution to garden and tree-lovers everywhere, filling a niche no other volume attempts to occupy. It is an authentic and endearing work, a book to be treasured and consulted long after

* *

"'The Story of California's Trees' will be a most interesting and useful book and I am glad to give it my hearty endorsement."

W. BERTRAND STEVENS

Episcopal Bishop of Los Angeles

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the initial reading. No one can read such a book without being benefitted thereby. He will view the palm, cypress, cedar, oak and many other trees in an entirely new light; he will see them cloaked in a new beauty, appreciate their very closeness to him. As he gains in knowledge of their colorful

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"'The Story of California's Trees' will meet a distinct need. It has always been my belief that the 'human side' of trees deserves more recognition."

MERRITT B. PRATT

State Forester

* *

past he will come to regard them as living actors in the drama of civilization's advancement through the ages. As Willis Lynn Jepson of the University of California so aptly expresses it in a letter to the author concerning this book: "His outlook is enlarged; his motives are refined; his thought becomes exalted. All that the tree means of permanence, stability and patience tends to color his life and helps to ennoble his manhood. No man that ever was, but was better for such intimate association."

WEEPING
WILLOW

Courtesy of
Edward Weston



THE AUTHOR

Henry Harcourt Waters, member of an old southern family, spent his boyhood days amongst the luxuriant tree growth of Louisiana, a favorable field for stimulating and developing the interest which was later to become his life work. This influenced him to attend the University of Toronto for study under the late Dr. B. E. Fernow, the 'Father of Forestry,' and moved him to engage in the practice of forestry and landscape architecture in Canada, in the South and in California. He has been intimately associated with trees, in one way or another, for the past twenty-five years.

Mr. Waters is not a writer by profession. His ignorance of professional tricks in writing, the unstudied freshness of his expressions, the startling originality of the similes and other comparisons, make his style all the more outstanding—terse, vivid, human, often humorous, the very simplicity and sincerity of which make it ideal for his subject.

Writing this book has been to him a labor of love. His reasons for undertaking the work are probably expressed in the concluding paragraph of his preface for the book:

"If, in the ensuing pages, satisfactory answers are given to the many questions frequently asked concerning the 'human' and classical side of our trees; if sufficient interest is created to save the life of a single historic tree; and if this volume proves of any value as a record for the story of California's trees, the pleasure derived in compiling it will fully justify the time given to an objective worthy of an abler pen."

SPONSORS

The charm and worth of this book are attested by the personnel of its sponsorship. The men and women, whose generosity has made this edition possible, are known for clarity of judgment and discriminating taste. Only an outstanding book could merit the active support of such a distinctive group of people. The list includes:

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*Frank A. Vanderlip, Palos Verdes
Dr. Alanson Weeks, Woodside
*recently deceased

FORMAT & PRICE

No more appropriate setting could have been chosen for making this book than Carmel-by-the-Sea. This charming pine-clad village, harboring a colony of distinguished writers and artists, is within a stone's throw of the famed Monterey Cypress, whose natural range is narrower than any tree amongst the earth's silva. The fastness of the nearby Santa Lucia range provides the home for the rare and unique Bristle-cone Fir. And four miles 'over the hill' stand the remains of the Vizcaino Oak of Old Monterey which was visited by Cabrillo eighteen years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth and whose heyday was half a century before Marshall discovered gold at Sutter's Mill!

Carmel-by-the-Sea is the home of the Carmel Press, a thoroughly modern and well-equipped plant. Many books, outstanding in their exquisite detail, have come from this press, and into no other hands could the present task be given with greater assurance of perfection in the finished product.

The format has been planned with the single purpose of producing the most beautiful book possible. Designing, printing and binding will be directed personally by A. Porter Halsey, a typographer who has spent a lifetime at this work with acknowledged masters of the art. His supervision makes certain that the volume will represent a triumph of the typographer's and binder's art and as such will have inestimable value as a table-piece.

Baskerville was chosen as the type face after serious consideration of many elements. One of the interesting deciding factors of this choice was the fact that John Baskerville, designer of the face, was directly responsible for the revival of fine printing prior to the nineteenth century — a period when fine book printing was at its lowest ebb. He not only brought the designing of fine books back to the high level it should occupy but, as well, improved upon and perfected many other phases of the art such as ink, paper, presses, methods of binding, etc.

Those fortunate enough to possess this book will treasure it far beyond its price. In its field, the volume will become as outstanding a work as are certain histories, biographies, poems and dramas. It will be all the more valuable because of the extremely limited number to be produced, and will undoubtedly be sought by collectors, as well as nature-lovers, at vastly increased prices.

FIRST EDITION

The price of Twenty-five Dollars has been fixed since the extremely fine workmanship and materials so apparent in the typography, binding and method of reproducing the illustrations have necessitated limiting the

edition to four hundred copies, of which three hundred and twenty are for sale, each copy being numbered and registered in the name of the purchaser, and, if requested, autographed by the author. As this goes to press, approximately one-third of the available copies has been subscribed for by those who have been familiar with the work since and during its inception.

Nine by twelve inches in size, it will be printed on domestic hand-made deckled paper. The binding will be full Cordovan. An exquisitely executed medallion—depicting with true faithfulness in every detail the ceremony of the earliest known tree-worshippers, the Druids—will adorn the front cover of the binding. Embracing as it does the human sacrifice, cage, oak, mistletoe, the Druids in Circle, and the dragon's egg outline, together with the ancient Latin inscription and the Celtic translation, it is indeed one of the finest pieces ever done by Rik Ben-Schafer, noted sculptor.

Of the fifty illustrations, a reproduction of the State's most noted tree, yet undecided by the Board of Arboriculturists asked to make the decision, will be etched directly on the frontispiece by Paul Whitman, whose art in this medium is internationally known. The remaining forty-nine will be reproduced by an exclusive English process that lends a depth and softness unattainable by any other method, from prints of Edward Weston and other noted photographers.

The title page and all chapter initials will be in color.

THE AUTHOR'S EDITION

This edition, priced at Ten Dollars and limited to one thousand copies, is, with the exception of the absence of hand-made paper, color on the title page and initials, and the extremely elaborate binding, identical to the First Edition that sells for Twenty-five Dollars a copy.

The fifty illustrations embraced within the volume will be exquisite reproductions of the prints of Edward Weston and other noted photographers.

Subscriptions for the First Edition at Twenty-five Dollars or for the Author's Edition at Ten Dollars will be accepted in rotation until the editions are exhausted. Owing to the cost of the fine materials and workmanship that go into limited editions, we are printing only the number of copies subscribed for. To insure your copy kindly sign the enclosed card and mail it to the Carmel Press, Incorporated, Carmel-by-the-Sea, California. It is not necessary to send any money with the subscription card as delivery is not to be expected until early summer. [Prices include sales tax and delivery.]

